

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 00723 151824Z

21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 AID-05 IO-11 DHA-02 /090 W

----- 113568

R 151816Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8146

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 00723

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, XF

SUBJECT: MRS. THATCHER ON THE MIDDLE EAST

1. SUMMARY. DURING HER RECENT TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST, CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER MRS. THATCHER FOUND HERSELF IN SYMPATHY WITH MANY OF THE ARGUMENTS PUT TO HER BY SYRIANS AND PALESTINIANS, BUT MADE NO HEADWAY IN EFFORTS TO SOFTEN ATTITUDES OR INDUCE ANY SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE. AT HOME SHE MUST HANDLE MIDDLE EAST POLICY CAUTIOUSLY, NOT LEAST BECAUSE HER SHADOW CABINET IS SPLIT ON THE ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR, PAID FAREWELL CALL ON MRS. THATCHER TODAY (JANUARY 15). SUBSTANTIVE PORTION OF MEETING WAS DEVOTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVE-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 00723 151824Z

LY TO MRS. THATCHER'S COMMENTS ON HER RECENT TRIP TO THE

MIDDLE EAST.

3. REFERRING TO HER PRESS CONFERENCE IN DAMASCUS, MRS. THATCHER SAID THAT SHE HAD TO COME OUT AND CONDEMN TERRORISM BECAUSE THIS WAS A MATTER OF DEEPLY FELT PRINCIPLE ON HER PART. HER HOSTS UNDERSTOOD THIS AND PRIVATELY AGREED WITH HER. THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS COIN, HOWEVER, WAS THAT ONE HAD TO LISTEN TO THE "LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES" OF PEOPLE WHOM ONE URGED TO ABJURE VIOLENCE, AND THE PALESTINIANS, SHE SAID, DID HAVE LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES. WE HAVE IGNORED THE PALESTINIANS' GRIEVANCES FOR TOO LONG, SHE WENT ON, AND THE KEY NOW WAS TO TREAT THEM AS ESSENTIALLY A POLITICAL RATHER THAN A REFUGEE PROBLEM.

4. DURING HER TRIP, MRS. THATCHER ASSERTED, SHE DID NOT SEE, WOULD NOT SEE THE PLO -- THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF HER SEEING THE PLO. SHE DID, HOWEVER, VISIT REFUGEE CAMPS WHERE SHE LISTENED TO THE BITTER COMPLAINTS OF PALESTINIANS. SHE ARGUED WITH THEM, TO NO AVAIL, THAT THEY SHOULD RECOGNIZE ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST, BUT ALWAYS ENCOUNTERED THE RESPONSE THAT AS THE OPPRESSED PARTIES IT WAS NOT UP TO THEM TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE.

5. IN HER TALKS WITH THE SYRIANS, MRS. THATCHER TRIED TO PERSUADE THEM NOT TO PUT UP A RESOLUTION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL SO EXTREME AS TO INVITE A U.S. VETO. SHE ARGUED THAT THE ONE AND ONLY ADVANCE ON RESOLUTION 242 LANGUAGE THEY SHOULD PUSH FOR WAS RECOGNITION THAT THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WAS ONE OF "NATIONAL IDENTITY." SHE WAS UNDER NO ILLUSION, HOWEVER, THAT SHE HAD MADE ANY HEADWAY WITH HER ARGUMENTS.

6. IN RESPONSE TO A SPECIFIC QUESTION FROM THE AMBASSADOR, MRS. THATCHER REPORTED THAT SHE ENCOUNTERED NO ANTI-EGYPTIAN REMARKS OR CRITICISMS OF SINAI II BY THE SYRIANS. NEITHER, SHE SAID, WAS THERE ANY SENTIMENT FOR A SEPARATE GOLAN HEIGHTS AGREEMENT UNLESS IT COULD BE COMBINED WITH CONCESSIONS TO THE PALESTINIANS.

7. IN CONCLUSION, MRS. THATCHER SAID THAT THE SYRIANS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LONDON 00723 151824Z

HAD STRESSED TO HER THEIR ANXIETY TO GET OUT FROM UNDER THE SOVIET YOKE.

8. COMMENT: MRS. THATCHER APPEARED TO HAVE DONE HER HOMEWORK AND MASTERED THE KEY ISSUES FOR THIS HER FIRST FORAY INTO MIDDLE EAST POLITICS. SHE SAID THAT ONE ON-THE-SPOT TRIP WAS WORTH MORE THAN VOLUMES OF BRIEFING MATERIAL. SHE ALSO CLEARLY BETRAYED HER SYMPATHY WITH

MANY OF THE ARGUMENTS ADVANCED BY BOTH PALESTINIANS AND SYRIANS. IN MARCH SHE WILL VISIT ISRAEL (WHERE SHE HAS BEEN BEFORE) TO HEAR AGAIN THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CASE. IN ANY EVENT, SHE WILL TREAD WARILY ON MIDDLE EAST POLICY AT HOME NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF ITS SENSITIVITY IN U.K. POLITICAL TERMS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE, AS SHE CANDIDLY ADMITTED, HER SHADOW CABINET IS SPLIT ON THE ISSUE.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLICIES, PARTY LEADERS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LONDON00723
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760016-0498
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760154/aaaabwdr.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <13 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MRS. THATCHER ON THE MIDDLE EAST
TAGS: PFOR, UK, XF, (THATCHER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006